

AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHER-PRINCIPAL
COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
SPECIALIST IN EDUCATION

BY


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ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

MAY 1981

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ABSTRACT

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R. L. Smith

ABSTRACT

This abstract will summarize the data gathered from an exploration of teacher-principal communication pattern study, discuss its implications and make recommendations.

Employed as a principal, the writer proposed to study principal-teacher communications believing that such a study would result in a contribution toward more effective use of principal-teacher communication in the area of class instruction, and the entire school curricula.

The issue of principal-teacher communications has been researched by educator's professional organizations. They have found relationships between the frequency and the types of communications, between purpose and the types of communication, between empathy and effectiveness of communication, and between training principals for empathy and actual empathetic behaviors.

As noted in the study by Carl Helwigs, "Analysis of the Relationship of the Degree of Satisfaction of Teachers Within Certain Ohio Schools With the Formal Communication of Their Principal", revealed that no significant correlation was discovered between frequency of principal-teacher communications and teacher morale.

Ellsworth Tompkins, J. Lloyd Trump, Jerrold M. Novotney, Blumberg and Schmuck studied "The Principal and the Challenge of Change". They suggested to help principals meet the challenge of change meant enlarging the administrative staff, increasing staff productivity through a horizontal and relatively informal type of organization,

delegating decision-making and administrative responsibilities as much as possible, and improve his own communication skills to maintain a clear understanding of roles and relationship among school system administrators were essential.

Donald G. Marcotte in the article entitled "Evaluation-The Purpose Is Communication", concluded that regardless of what specific purpose a given evaluation might have, the primary function of all evaluation is communication. It is a two-way communication between principal and the teacher with the desired result of improving instruction.

More importantly, as reported in the article, "Improving Communication Skills of Administrators" by Beale and Bost:

Assistant principal, indeed, all school administrators, must work with people. A vital factor in working effectively with people is the ability to communicate.

According to Beale and Bost, the ability to put one's self in the other fellow's shoes and let him know you are interested in the single most important factor in the helping process. Recognizing this factor, Beale and Bost designed a workshop with the express purpose of improving the interpersonal skills of 26 assistant principals. The results of the study gave overwhelming support to Beale's and Bost's belief that positive changes can be made in the empathetic discrimination abilities of assistant principals.

The Association of California School Administrators published a study entitled "Pressure Pot Communication: Development of Skills to Handle Professional Development Program" for a professional development program aimed at administrators. The program goals were to improve interpersonal relationships by developing communication skills.

Principal consistency is vital in maintaining effective teacher-principal communications. Teachers want to receive unambiguous signals from their principal. In order to be effective, teachers need a clear view of what the principal really values and what he expects of them.

Previous studies were helpful to researchers who were interested in the frequency and types of communication. This study, however, was designed to correlate patterns of communications between teachers and principals, and their effects on teachers, students and auxiliary personnel. In the interest of increasing the effectiveness of principals, this study was constructed to broaden principals' and other administrators' knowledge of these communication patterns.

The researcher revised the Administration Empathy Discrimination Index. It was used to identify ten areas for which the researcher formulated practical situations that required possible teacher-principal communications.

The researcher also used the five response categories and developed statements which described reactions a principal may evidence in the situation.

The target population consisted of all teachers who became participants in the study within a period of three months prior to the beginning of the research. The entire target population was included in this study.

The results of the study revealed at Avondale the teachers communicated with the department chairpersons more frequently. The Avondale teachers also pointed out that their principal reacted most often by giving instructions. A close second opinion was that the principal

complimented them for their ideas. The results of the Columbia respondents revealed the departmental chairperson as the person whom they communicated most frequently. The Columbia teachers described their principals' reactions most often as giving instructions.

The results of the Dunwoody respondents revealed the assistant principal as the person whom they communicated most frequently. The Dunwoody teachers described their principal's reactions most frequently by asking questions. A close second opinion was that the principal reacted by giving instructions.

This study confirms that patterns of communication between principals and teachers do have an effect on individuals within a school system. Teachers who go to principals and other administrators for guidance concerning students' progress or behavior, questions regarding professional goals, problems relating to instruction and curriculum planning, and in other daily activities are asking for assistance in carrying out duties which influence all aspects of school life. The type of response and the teachers' perception of the administrators' attitude, therefore, have a powerful influence on the entire school.

Teachers who felt that the principal made a judgment about the worth of their concerns confided to the researcher that they would prefer the principal to accept their ideas without indicating agreement or disagreement. The best and most effective communication between teacher and principal exists when the principal shows interest and understanding, and yet is non-judgmental. Thus, the more empathetic the principal's response, the better the teachers felt. Presumably, the better the teachers felt, the better they, in turn, would perform.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the beginning of our educational history, some teachers have viewed their principals and other educational superiors as tyrants, dictators, and, in some few instances as slave drivers. Some teachers, down through the ages, have resented this type of relationship. Findings reported from some research studies support these conclusions.¹

Further research has revealed that some teachers evidence their feelings of resentment toward their superiors. As a result of their feelings, their students and quality of academic work suffer tremendously.

Two trends which may today markedly affect secondary education in general and high school management in particular should increase in intensity during the 1980's: declining public school enrollment and increasing private school enrollment. The enrollment decline experienced by elementary schools since 1969 is just beginning in high schools. By the early 1990's secondary school enrollment will have declined by 25 percent. Instead of the 17 million students attending secondary schools last year only 13 million will be enrolled a dozen years from now.²

The role of the principal is a complex one, tied to shifts in the school population and changing public demands. Standard responses to

¹Richard V. Hatley, "Education Change--Promise, Pitfalls and Promises", NASSP Bulletin 63:425 (March 1979).

²Harriett Fishlow, "Demography and Changing Enrollments, in Declining Enrollment: The Challenge of the Coming Decade", eds. Susan Abramowitz and Stewart Rosenfeld (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, March 1978).

date include many more demands for increased accountability and attempts at programmatic contraction.

The accountability movement has recently been sweeping the country in its largest guise: minimum competency tests and proficiency examinations.

As more attention is focused on student performance, it is very likely that increased scrutiny of teacher performance is not very far behind. As demands for teacher accountability increase, the principal's responsibility for monitoring teacher performance is also likely to expand.

These demands for accountability and curricular reform and the belief that they will make high school work better are based on some of the same assumptions people have always made about how high school are organized, managed, and steered under the leadership of today's principals.

The writer agrees with educators who say that teachers should be able to communicate with their immediate superiors so that system goals for pupils are actualized during the educational process. Employed as principal, the writer proposes to study principal-teacher communication, believing that such a study will result in a contribution toward more effective use of principal-teacher communication in the area of classroom instruction, and the entire school curricula.

Statement of Problem

This is a study of the reactions of teachers toward principals in communicative skills and abilities in the area of instructional programs in three specific high schools, Columbia, Avondale, and Dunwoody in the DeKalb County School System in Decatur and Dunwoody, Georgia.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to answer the following questions concerning three high school principals and their teachers in Columbia, Avondale, and Dunwoody high schools in DeKalb County, Decatur, and Dunwoody, Georgia:

1. What patterns of communication exist among teachers and principals?
 - a. students in classes
 - b. students in extracurricula activities
 - c. students in non-school functions
 - d. auxiliary personnel
2. What do these patterns of communication reveal to the teachers?
3. What do these patterns of communication reveal to the principals?
4. What implications of administrators in general can be derived from the findings of this study?

Locus and Subjects of the Study

The specific high schools--Columbia, Avondale, and Dunwoody--are located in DeKalb County. Each school is a modern brick plant, housing approximately 1700 to 2000 pupils. Each building is completely air-conditioned, and is equipped with a media center, cafeteria, and gymnasium. In addition to regular classrooms, the schools are equipped with laboratories for language arts, math, business and industrial arts, which include graphics, workshop and drafting. Science labs are designed to facilitate instruction and laboratory experiences in biology, chemistry and physics. Each plant provides separate facilities for administrative and counseling personnel, as well as health unit.

The subjects used in conducting this study were:

- a. approximately two hundred teachers employed in the three respective high schools, Columbia, Avondale, and Dunwoody in DeKalb County during the school term 1979-80, whose academic training exceeds four-year college training.
- b. The three principals hold the master's degree in administration with added hours toward some higher degree in the area of administration or supervision.

A combined questionnaire and checklist was constructed as data gathering devices in this study.

Period of the Study

This study was begun in September and was extended throughout the school term, 1979-80.

Method of Research

The descriptive survey method of research, with the combined questionnaire, checklist, and interview was employed for securing data in this study. See Appendix for an explanation of the development of the questionnaire used in the study. Because this is an exploratory survey, the null hypotheses were developed during the research process and are stated in Chapter 4.

Scope and Limitations

This study is concerned with the reactions of the teachers toward principals in communicative skills and abilities in the instructional programs in three specific high schools: Columbia, Avondale, and Dunwoody in the DeKalb County School System in Decatur and Dunwoody, Georgia. No effort was made to prove that teachers' reactions toward principals affected the academic excellence of the students. Because there were so many factors

which influenced these developments, it was virtually impossible to draw such conclusions from this data.

It is important to recognize, further, that 159 out of 215 secondary teachers were used in gathering this data.

Procedure

In order to secure data for the purpose of this study, the writer first began recording some complaints, gripes, and negative responses from teachers at various stations during school hours and in after-school functions.

Secondly, some suggestions were collected, studied, and compared.

Thirdly, the writer devised a questionnaire checklist and this was submitted to persons competent to judge it. A valid procedure employing teachers was devised.

Operational Steps

1. The descriptive survey method of research was employed in this study.
2. Literature pertinent to this study was reviewed.
3. A combined questionnaire checklist was devised and submitted to persons competent to judge the adequacy and significance of the questions which constituted it.
4. Data necessary for this study was collected by administering this combined questionnaire checklist to the teachers.
5. These findings were reported in the thesis copy by use of appropriate descriptions, tables, figures, etc.
6. Summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations are presented.

Definitions of Terms

1. Communication patterns - The repeated selection of persons with whom to communicate and the repeated flow of communication about particular subjects with those persons.
2. Communication skills - The ability of an administrator to select a response preceived by teachers as appropriate to their ideas and concerns in practical school situations.
3. Response categories - The types of reactions a principal may evidence in a given situation as follows:
 - (a) The principal made a judgment about the worth of my idea or concern.
 - (b) The principal gave instructions about what to do with my idea or concern.
 - (c) The principal complimented me for having and sharing ideas or concerns.
 - (d) The principal asked questions about my idea or concern.
 - (e) The principal accepted my idea without indicating agreement or disagreement.
4. Communication categories - Ten practical situations that required possible teacher-principal communication which follow:
 - (a) Developing objectives and goals for the school's program.
 - (b) Assessing student's progress
 - (c) Evaluating student's behavior
 - (d) Seeking professional counseling
 - (e) Using authoritative control
 - (f) Assessing leadership qualities
 - (g) Appraising classroom performance
 - (h) Employing instructional techniques
 - (i) Assessing parent's involvement
 - (j) Evaluating teacher involvement in extra curricular activities.

CHAPTER II

This chapter will review the literature and summarize research findings on factors affecting teacher-principal communication patterns.

With this object in mind, this chapter will examine the importance of the principal's communication skills, as it relates to teacher morale, teacher effectiveness and effective teacher evaluation.

Attention is also devoted to other studies concerning the basic principle of effective teacher-principal communications, response patterns of school administrators, and the flow of interpersonal influence.

School administrators are becoming increasingly aware that one of the most critical elements for the successful and efficient achievement of both individual and institutional goals is the human element involving effective communication skills.

Carl Helwig's study, An Analysis of the Relationship of the Degree of Satisfaction of Teachers Within Certain Ohio Schools With the Formal Communication of Their Principal, reveals the results of the following two hypotheses: (1) that the frequency of oral and written communication between a principal and his teachers was related to teacher morale, and (2) that the communication frequency was related to school organizational climate. The sample consisted of 37 Ohio elementary school principals and 310 teachers. Principals kept 20-day records on types of formal communications as the variable of frequency of principal-teacher communications. Teachers completed a scale measuring faculty perception of the school organizational

climate. No significant correlation was discovered between total principal-teacher communications and teacher morale.

Teacher-principal communications and the challenge of change was studied by Ellsworth Tompkins and J. Lloyd Trump. In the article "The Secondary School Principalship and the Challenge of Change" they stated that the secondary school principal is responsible for determining programs and procedures, enlisting teacher aid in those determinations, resolving staff resistance to change, indentifying staff members as effective change agents, and working with them to implement change. Suggestions to help the principal discharge his responsibility for improving instruction include freeing him from other responsibilities by enlarging his administrative staff, increasing staff productivity through a horizontal and relatively informal type of organization, delegating decision-making and administrative responsibilities as much as possible, improving his own communication skills, and maintaining a clear understanding of roles and relationships among school system administration.

In addition Jerrold M. Novotney in the article "The Principal and the Challenge of Change: cited a study by Blunberg and Schmuck (1972) which stated that "The Principal's" concerns for change and development move him in the direction of improving communications with individual teachers and not with organizational norms and group problem-solving.

Teacher-principal communication and effective teacher evaluation was studied by Donald G. Marcotte in the article entitled "Evaluation--The Purpose Is Communication." Marcotte concluded that regardless of what specific purpose a given evaluation might have, the primary function of all evaluation is communication. It is two-way communication between the administrator and the teacher with the desired result of improving instruction. The more the

purpose of evaluation swings toward ranking teachers, differentiating among them, or determining merit raises, the more it swings away from improvement of instruction, and the less valid are the above argument for keeping the process flexible and assuring that real communication takes place. If the chief format of an evaluation system is ranked criteria, how real and specific is the communication? The administrator seeking effective teacher evaluation should be cautious about borrowing or creating near-looking extensive evaluation documents and formats without first examining whether they truly allow and encourage real and specific communication.

It has been determined that many of the verbal responses of school administrators fall into five general categories similar to those identified by Porter, Satir and Wittner, and Myrick as reported in the NASSP Bulletin, 1950, 1972, 1974. As reported in the article, "Improving Communications Skills of Administrators" by Beale and Bost, a conclusion was given:

"Assistant principals, indeed, all school administrators, must work with people. A vital factor in working effectively with people is the ability to communicate."

Researchers tell us, according to Beale and Bost, that the ability to put one's self in the other fellow's shoes and let him know you are interested is the single most important factor in the helping process. Recognizing this factor, Beale and Bost designed a workshop with the express purpose of improving the interpersonal skills of 26 assistant principals.

The Administrator Empathy Discrimination Index was constructed especially for Beale and Bost's study. It is a forced-choice scale requiring participants to choose among alternatives. It was determined that many of the verbal responses of school administrators fall into five general categories. The response categories, presented in order of least helpful (1) to most helpful or facilitative (5), are:

1. Evaluative (commander-in-chief). This type response indicated you have determined what the other person should or ought to do. You have made a judgment of relative goodness, appropriateness, effectiveness, or rightness. Such responses bring to bear on the other person the power of external authority, duty, or obligation.
2. Instructive (know-it-all). This type response indicated your intent is to teach, advise, or bring to light special meanings through the use of facts, logic, counterarguments, information, or your own opinion. After all, you have been traveling life's road for a long time and have accumulated most of its answers. In essence, you're communicating how superior you believe you are.
3. Placating (the consoler). This type response indicated your intent is to make the other person feel better, talk him out of his feelings, deny the strength of his feelings, or to pacify the other person. Persons who display this attitude attempt to excuse themselves from involvement by treating the other person's feelings lightly. Simple assurances, sympathy, and a pat on the back are this person's answer to the other's worries and concerns.
4. Probing (the interrogator). This type response indicates your intent is to seek further information, provoke further discussion, or to query an individual regarding a particular matter. One undesirable aspect of this type response is that it tends to foster a question/answer pattern of interaction, which impeded spontaneous discussion.
5. Understanding (leveler). This type response indicated your intent is to allow the other person to express beliefs and feelings honestly, without fear of disapproval or rejection. You neither disagree nor agree with the other person, but you demonstrate you accept the other's feelings and his right to express his views. This type response involves grasping what the other person feels and means, and then conveying this understanding back to the other person. In other words, it gives the other person feedback.

While all of these responses might be considered appropriate at one time or another, they were so ranked because of their probable effect on establishing a helping relationship. Specifically, Beale and Bost were interested in determining whether the empathetic discrimination abilities of assistant principals could be improved by participation in an eight-hour communication workshop.

The results of the study gave overwhelming support to Beale and Bost's belief that positive changes can be made in the empathetic discrimination abilities of assistant principals.

The Association of California School Administrators published a study entitled Pressure Pot Communication: Development of Skills to Handle Professional Development Program, for a professional development program. Aimed at administrators, the program goals were to improve interpersonal relationships by developing communication skills. A collection of Learning materials was assembled for the participants, which included a questionnaire to help participants analyze their present management style, checklist concerning employee communications and principals' community relations a form to analyze how participants communicate with others in face-to-face situations, an exercise in selecting teacher performance evaluation criteria, and a typology of organizational styles. Four basic communication skills for improving interpersonal relationships were listed:

- (1) Paraphrase: Stating in your own way what the other's remark conveys to you.
- (2) Behavior Description: Reporting specific, observable actions of others without making accusations or generalizations about their motives, personality or character traits.
- (3) Description of Feelings: Specifying or identifying feelings by name, simile, figure of speech or action urge. Describing your own feelings: Reporting your own inner state as explicitly as you can - making sure the statement indicates the feelings are in you.
- (4) Perception check: Describing what you perceive to be the other's inner state in order to check whether you do understand what he feels.

The Administrator Empathy Discrimination Index describes general responses of administrators, while the Association of California School Administrator's Study cited above suggests techniques effective in improving communication. The CSAS provides insight into both positive and negative responses, while the AEDI provides concrete techniques for improving negative responses of administrators.

Principal consistency is vital in maintaining effective teacher-principal communications. Teachers want to receive unambiguous signals from their principal. In order to be effective, teachers need a clear view of what the principal really values and what he expects of them. Teachers who move from one school to another report that their teaching styles change in response to the new administrative atmosphere as much as they do in response to the new children.

Particularly noticeable and important to teachers is a principal's consistency between what he preaches and what he practices. Ideally his behavior will mirror his stated policy. But all that he does--actions, questions, decisions--are clues to his own self-awareness and directly responsible for teacher and pupil behavior. Administrators who are unclear as to their goals often cherish inflexible procedures.

As has been noted, the issue of principal-teacher communications has been researched by educators and by professional organizations. They have found relationships between frequency and types of communication, between purpose and effect of communications, between empathy and effectiveness of communication, and between training principals for empathy and actual empathetic and effective communications have yet to be investigated.

CHAPTER III

INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Having some specifics in mind, the researcher undertook the following steps before finalizing the instrument which is to be used in the study.

1. Two assistant superintendents (Dr. Donald Schultz and Mr. William "Bill" Pemberton) of the DeKalb County Schools were contacted to inform them of the research.

2. The two assistant superintendents advised the researcher to send an official letter to the Superintendent of DeKalb County School, Dr. James Hinson, for approval to conduct the study.

3. The researcher was given permission by Dr. Donald Schultz to contact the principals of the three schools in which the proposed research would be conducted.

4. The three principals were visited and briefed on the research proposal. They immediately showed some enthusiasm about their involvement in the project. They were willing to cooperate as they were to become integral parts of the final product.

The items in the instrument were designed to represent somewhat candid feelings of two hundred secondary teachers in three different secondary schools in the DeKalb County School System.

The researcher has remained cognizant of possible biases that may exist in the construction of the instrument so that they may be kept to a minimum.

The researcher believed that the teachers would not feel threatened in giving the information asked of them. The researcher further believed that the teachers would be willing and truthful, as they would be assured that their responses would remain anonymous, and, at the same time, their cooperation would possibly contribute to much needed programs in the field of educational research.

This instrument is not designed to provide an indicator of how or why the schools' faculties exist as they do. Neither is it designed to assess the teachers' competencies. It is intended to serve as a basis for understanding the communication patterns between teachers and principals.

Such a survey, if answered honestly, should identify some strengths and weaknesses in the interactions among the school personnel. And it, perhaps, may provide a factual basis for making decisions in the interest of strengthening the three separate units (i.e., schools).

This survey instrument consists of twenty situations, with six possible responses for each situation. The six response categories are identified below for questions to determine with whom teachers communicate.

1. The principal
2. The assistant principal for instruction
3. The counselor
4. The department and chairperson
5. The instructional coordinator
6. None of the above

These represent the major role groups of the school. There are also six possible responses for each situation to determine perceived reactions of the principal as identified below:

- (1) The principal made a judgment about the worth of my idea or concern.
- (2) The principal gave instructions about what to do with my idea or concern.
- (3) The principal complimented me for having and sharing ideas or concerns.
- (4) The principal asked questions about my idea or concern.
- (5) The principal accepted my idea without indicating agreement or disagreement.
- (6) Not applicable.

5. The researcher surveyed related literature, recorded some findings that had been reported by experts, conferenced with three advisors, and decided to use the Administrators Empathy Discrimination Index (AEDI) as a guide, in an effort to improve the empathy communication skills of school administrators. The Administrators Empathy Discrimination Index is a forced choice scale requiring participants to choose among alternatives.

6. The researcher adapted the categories used in the Administration Empathy Discrimination Index to formulate questions to identify ten areas for which the researcher formulated practical situations that required possible teacher-principal communications.

The researcher also used the five response categories and developed statements which described reactions a principal may evidence in the situation. The ten areas used as the researcher's approach in the model are listed:

1. Developing objectives and goals for the school's program
2. Assessing students' progress
3. Evaluating students' behavior
4. Seeking professional counseling

5. Using authoritative control
6. Assessing leadership qualities
7. Appraising classroom performance
8. Employing instructional techniques
9. Assessing parents' involvement
10. Evaluating teacher involvement in extra-curricular activities.

The target population consisted of all teachers who became participants in the study within a period of three months prior to the beginning of the research. The entire target population was included in the study.

The general problem of this study was to explore ten specific areas of teacher-principal communication patterns. In the "A" portion of the survey, the writer sought to explore communication patterns with certain certificated personnel (teachers, department chairpersons, counselors, assistant principals, principals, and instructional coordinators) in a given situation when ten specific factors existed. The respondents were asked to respond to ten specific items in a questionnaire. The ten items were:

- I. ____ (a) If you are having difficulty in the development of objectives and goals for the school program, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- II. ____ (a) If you are having difficulty assessing students' progress in your classroom, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- III. ____ (a) If you wanted advice on how to develop student self-control, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- IV. ____ (a) If you seek (professional) assistance for counseling students, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- V. ____ (a) If a student questioned your authority in the classroom, with whom would you communicate most frequently?

- VI. ____ (a) If you wanted to demonstrate your instructional leadership qualities, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- VII. ____ (a) If you were pleased with a lesson that you prepared, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- VIII. ____ (a) If you wanted to share your knowledge of a variety of instructional techniques, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- IX. ____ (a) If you have experienced difficulty with a parent, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- X. ____ (a) If you were excited about the success of your extra-curricular activity, with whom would you communicate most frequently?

Item numbers in the tables refer to these ten area of communication. In the "B" portion of the survey, the writer sought to explore in what ways the teacher felt the principal responded when approached with the ten given situations. The ten given situations were:

- I. ____ (b) When you have communicated with the principal about instructional goals and objectives in the past, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- II. ____ (b) When communicating with the principal strategies for assessing students' progress, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- III. ____ (b) When you reported a serious behavior problem to your principal, in what way has he most frequently responded?
- IV. ____ (b) When you wanted feedback from the principal on a counseling technique, in what ways has he most frequently responded?
- V. ____ (b) When a student failed to follow your instructions and you reported it to your principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- VI. ____ (b) When you discussed instructional leadership strategies which are innovative with the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- VII. ____ (b) When you communicated concerns about your classroom performance to the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?

- VIII. ____ (b) When you needed additional information concerning an instructional technique from the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- IX. ____ (b) When a parent has questioned your judgment in the presence of the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- X. ____ (b) When you have shared success in an extracurricular activity with the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?

Item numbers in the tables refer to these ten determined situations. The researcher used the Administration Empathy Discrimination Index as a guide to formulate the following six response options:

- (7) The principal made a judgment about the worth of my idea or concern.
- (8) The principal gave instructions about what to do with my idea or concern.
- (9) The principal complimented me for having and sharing ideas or concerns.
- (10) The principal asked questions about my idea or concern.
- (11) The principal accepted my idea without indicating agreement or disagreement.
- (12) Not applicable

The writer reminds the reader that it was determined that many of the verbal responses of school administrators fall into five general categories similar to those identified by Porter, Satin, and Wittner, and Myrick as reported in the NASSP Bulletin, 1950, 1972 and 1974. The aforementioned choices were carefully selected from which the teacher identified the principal's response.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The study followed specific steps, one of which was to adapt a published questionnaire in order to survey the candid feelings concerning ten specific areas of teacher-principal communication patterns. Three high schools in DeKalb County were selected. Teachers were asked to follow instructions contained within the questionnaire.

The subjects were asked to provide the descriptive information that follows as it concerned them: sex, race, school, subject taught, number of years experience and highest certificate held.

The following data describes the respondents in this study: one hundred fifty-nine teachers who are employed in three respective high schools, Avondale, Columbia and Dunwoody in DeKalb County during the school term 1979-80, whose academic training exceeds four-year college training.

The descriptive survey method of research, with the combined questionnaire was employed to secure data in this study. The survey was distributed to approximately two hundred fifteen teachers in three respective high schools, Avondale, Columbia, and Dunwoody in DeKalb County, Georgia. The subjects were asked to return the questionnaire after completion to the respective principals. The principals forwarded the questionnaires to the researcher for tabulation.

The Chi-Square test was employed to test the data tabulated from the questionnaires, for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

The Chi-Square test was employed to test the data tabulated from the questionnaires, for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

TABLE 1
RESPONDENTS BY SEX

School	Female	Male	No Sex Indicated	Total
Avondale	29	9	2	40
Columbia	44	13	2	59
Dunwoody	35	18	7	60
TOTAL	108	40	11	159

$$\chi^2 = 1.31$$

$$df = 4$$

$$P < 0.90$$

Table 1 describes the respondents involved in this study by sex and school. Table 1 indicated in general, females and males involved in the study at the three high schools, Avondale, Columbia and Dunwoody showed no significant difference (at .05 level) in the distribution by sex. The Chi-Square test was employed in this table for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

TABLE 2
RESPONDENTS BY RACE

School	Black	White	Other	No Response	Total
Avondale	4	35	0	1	40
Columbia	9	49	0	1	59
Dunwoody	8	47	0	5	60
TOTALS	21	131	0	7	159

$$\chi^2 = .490808$$

$$df = 4$$

$$P < .98$$

Table 2 describes the respondents involved in this study by race and school. Table 2 indicates in general, blacks and whites involved in the study at the three high schools, Avondale, Columbia and Dunwoody showed no significant difference (at the .05 level) in the distribution by race. The Chi-Square test was employed in this for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

TABLE 3
RESPONDENTS BY SUBJECTS

School	Fine Arts	Social Studies	Choral Music	Physical Education	Science	Mathematics	Media Specialist	Foreign Language	Business Education	English	Special Education	Vocational Education	Counselors	Industrial Arts	Home Economics	Reading	Distributive Education	No Response	Total
Avondale	1	7	1	1	5	5	3	3	3	6	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	40
Columbia	0	10	1	2	7	8	2	2	3	12	3	0	0	1	1	2	0	5	59
Dunwoody	2	11	0	6	9	8	1	1	2	6	3	0	2	1	0	0	2	6	60
TOTALS	3	28	2	9	21	21	5	5	7	24	9	1	2	3	1	2	2	14	159

$$\chi^2 = 11.62$$

$$df = 34$$

$$z = 3.37$$

Table 3 describes the respondents involved in this study by subject taught and school. Table 3 indicates that in general teachers involved in the study at three high schools, Avondale, Columbia and Dunwoody showed significance in the distribution by subjects. The limited number of teachers involved in this study caused a skewed distribution. The reader is cautioned when interpreting results of the questionnaire because of these findings.

TABLE 4
RESPONDENTS BY CERTIFICATION

School	T-4	T-5	T-6	Ed.S.	Ph.D.	Other	No Response	Total
Avondale	10	26	4	0	0	0	0	40
Columbia	30	19	10	0	0	0	0	59
Dunwoody	8	34	14	0	1	0	3	60
TOTALS	48	79	28	0	1	0	3	159

$$\chi^2 = 5.65$$

$$df = 12$$

$$P < .005$$

Table 4 describes the respondents in this study by certification and school. Table 4 indicated in general, teachers involved in the study at the three high schools, Avondale, Columbia and Dunwoody showed no significant difference (at the .05 level) in the distribution by degrees held. The Chi-Square test was employed in this table for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

TABLE 5
RESPONDENTS BY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

School	1-5	6-10	11-15	Over 15	No Response	Total
Avondale	11	20	4	4	1	40
Columbia	31	15	6	7	0	59
Dunwoody	15	15	11	19	0	60
TOTALS	57	50	21	30	1	159

$$\chi^2 = 45.64$$

$$df = 8$$

$$P < .001$$

Table 5 describes the respondents in this study by teaching experience and school. Table 5 indicated in general, teachers involved in the study at the three high schools, Avondale, Columbia and Dunwoody. There is a significant difference in the distribution by degree held. Avondale and Columbia have significantly less experienced personnel. Care is recommended in interpreting results.

Tables 1-5 contain data that were originally intended to provide capabilities for comparisons of questionnaire responses across schools and within schools by sex, race, experience, training and subject taught. Because of the limitations of thesis research, however, comparative analysis were not carried out. Therefore, the analyses are only case study analysis of each school in the sample.

The Findings

H₀ The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference (at the .05 level) in patterns of selection of persons with whom teachers communicated in the three selected DeKalb County High Schools.

Teachers' communicative patterns from Avondale are presented subsequently. The Chi-Square Test was employed in Table 6 for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

Table 6 presents responses for Avondale High School. Of 400 responses, 95 responses or 23.75% of Avondale teachers pointed out the principal as the person with whom they communicated most frequently in Items V, IX, and X. The persons receiving the second highest number of responses were the department chairpersons. Of 400 responses, 84 or 21% of the Avondale teachers indicated the department chairpersons were the persons with whom they communicated most frequently. Those categories pointed to Items I, II, VII, and VIII. The persons receiving the third highest number of responses was the assistant principal. Of 400 responses, 62 responses or 15.5% of the teachers indicated the assistant principal as the person with whom they communicated most frequently. Those categories pointed to Items III and VI. The persons receiving the fourth highest number of responses were the counselors. Of 400 responses, 58 responses or 14.5% of the Avondale teachers indicated the counselor was the person with whom they communicated most frequently. The category pointed to Item IV. The person receiving the fifth highest number of responses was the instructional coordinator. Of 400 responses, 36 responses or 9% of the Avondale teachers indicated the instructional coordinator was the person with whom they communicated most frequently.

TABLE 6

AVONDALE RESPONSES
ROLE SELECTED BY AVONDALE TEACHERS FOR COMMUNICATION ON PRACTICAL SITUATIONS

		ROLE GROUPS								
		Principal	Assistant Principal	Counselor	Department Chairperson	Instructional Chairperson	None of the Above	No Response	Incorrect Response	TOTAL
I	Goals and Objectives	20% 8	22.5% 8	0% 0	42.5% 17	10% 4	2.5% 1	2.5% 1	0	40
II	Student Progress	0% 0	15% 6	20% 8	32.5% 13	17.5% 7	10% 4	5% 2	0	40
III	Student Behavior	10% 4	25% 10	20% 8	10% 4	7.5% 3	25% 10	1	0	40
IV	Professional Counseling	2.5% 1	0% 0	87.5% 35	0% 0	0% 0	7.5% 3	2.5% 1	0	40
V	Classroom Control	37.5% 15	17.5% 7	2.5% 1	2.5% 1	0% 0	37.5% 15	2.5% 1	0	40
VI	Leadership Assessment	22.5% 9	25% 10	0% 0	17.5% 7	20% 8	7.5% 3	2.5% 1	2	40
VII	Classroom Performance	12.5% 5	17.5% 7	0% 0	50% 20	12.5% 5	5% 2	2.5% 1	0	40
VIII	Instruction Techniques	7.5% 3	20% 8	0% 0	40% 16	20% 8	10% 4	2.5% 1	0	40
IX	Parent Involvement	62.5% 25	7.5% 3	12.5% 5	2.5% 1	12.5% 5	2.5% 1	5% 2	0	40
X	Extra Curricular Activities	62.5% 25	5% 2	2.5% 1	12.5% 5	2.5% 1	5% 2	2.5% 1	7.5% 3	40
TOTALS		23.75% 95	15.5% 62	14.5% 58	21% 84	9% 36	12.25% 49	2.75% 11	1.25% 5	400

$$\chi^2 = 79.38$$

$$df = 63$$

$$P < .0778$$

H₁ The null hypothesis for the "B" portion of this study states there will be no significant difference (at the .05 level) in the way high school principals in the DeKalb County System respond to teacher's ideas and concerns.

The Chi-Square test was employed on Table 7 for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data. Table 7 represents the responses for Avondale High School. For Items I and IV the Avondale teachers felt the principal reacted by asking questions about their ideas or concerns. For Item II, there was no clear majority. The teachers described the principals' reactions equally as judgmental about the worth of my idea or concern and gave instructions about what to do with my ideas or concerns. For Items III, IV, V and VIII the Avondale teachers viewed the principals' reaction as the principal gave instructions about what to do with their idea or concern. For items VI, VIII, IX and X, the Avondale teachers felt the principal reacted by complimenting them for having and sharing ideas or concerns. The accumulated totals showed the Avondale teachers felt the principal reacted in most instances by giving instructions about what to do with their idea or concern or by complimenting them for having and sharing ideas or concerns.

The survey of the Avondale faculty represented by the responses in Table 6 pointed out that teachers communicated with various persons when seeking assistance with a given situation. The person with whom they communicated most frequently was identified to be the department chairperson. The Avondale teachers also felt the principal reacted to their ideas or concerns by complimenting them for having and sharing ideas or concerns.

TABLE 7

PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS' TO RESPONSE BY AVONDALE
TEACHERS TO PRACTICAL SITUATION QUERIES BY AVONDALE TEACHERS

Item No.	Judgment	Instruction	Compliment	Questions	Acceptance	Not Applicable	No Response	Incorrect Response	TOTAL
I	6	8	6	10	3	6	1	0	40
II	8	8	2	5	0	16	1	0	40
III	1	22	3	2	4	7	1	0	40
IV	4	5	2	5	0	22	2	0	40
V	6	15	1	2	6	7	1	2	40
VI	4	2	19	3	4	7	1	0	40
VII	2	8	13	4	5	7	1	0	40
VIII	2	12	1	6	0	16	1	1	40
IX	3	2	11	2	2	15	3	2	40
X	2	0	22	5	1	8	1	1	40
TOTALS	38	82	80	44	25	112	13	6	400

$$\chi^2 = 20.63$$

$$df = 63$$

$$z = 4.76 < .01$$

H₂ The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference (at the .05 level) in patterns of selection of persons with whom teachers communicated in the three DeKalb County High Schools.

Teachers' communicative patterns from Columbia are presented subsequently. The Chi-Square test was employed in Table 8 for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

Of 590 responses, 140 responses or 23.73% of Columbia teachers pointed out that the department chairpersons were the persons with whom they communicated most frequently. Those categories pointed to Items I, II, VII, and VIII. The person receiving the second highest number of responses was the principal. Of 590 responses, 127 responses or 21.53% of the Columbia teachers indicated the principal was the person with whom they communicated most frequently. Those categories Items V, IX, and X. The person receiving the third highest number of responses was the assistant principal. Of 590 responses, 103 responses or 17.56% of the Columbia teachers indicated the assistant principal was the person with whom they communicated most frequently. Those categories are Items III and VI. The person receiving the fourth highest number of responses was the counselor. Of 590 responses, 81 responses or 13.73% of the teachers indicated the counselor was the person with whom they communicated most frequently. The category is Item IV. The person receiving the fifth highest number of responses was the instructional coordinator. Of 590 responses, 47 responses or 7.97% of the Columbia teachers indicated the instructional coordinator was the person with whom they communicated most frequently.

H₃ The null hypotheses for the "B" portion of this study states there will be no significant difference (at the .05 level) in the way high school principals in the DeKalb School System respond to teachers ideas and concerns.

TABLE 8

COLUMBIA RESPONSES
ROLE GROUPS SELECTED BY COLUMBIA TEACHERS FOR COMMUNICATION ON PRACTICAL SITUATIONS

		ROLE GROUPS							TOTAL
		Principal	Assistant Principal	Counselor	Department Chairperson	Instructional Chairperson	None of the Above	No Response	
I	Goals and Objectives	18.64% 11	27.12% 16	0% 0	40.68% 24	11.86% 7	1.69% 1	0 0	59
II	Student Progress	0% 0	15.25% 9	23.73% 14	37.29% 22	15.29% 9	8.47% 5	0 0	59
III	Student Behavior	15.25% 9	18.64% 11	15.25% 9	13.56% 8	5.08% 3	30.51% 18	1.69% 1	59
IV	Professional Counseling	3.39% 2	1.69% 1	84.75% 50	3.39% 2	0% 0	6.78% 4	0 0	59
V	Classroom Control	28.81% 17	15.25% 9	0% 0	3.39% 2	0% 0	50.85% 30	1.69% 1	59
VI	Leadership Assessment	16.95% 10	40.68% 24	0% 0	18.64% 11	15.25% 9	3.39% 2	0 3	59
VII	Classroom Performance	8.47% 5	18.64% 11	0% 0	55.93% 33	11.86% 7	5.08% 3	0 0	59
VIII	Instruction Techniques	5.08% 3	22.03% 13	0% 0	47.46% 28	15.25% 9	8.47% 5	1.69% 1	59
IX	Parent Involvement	61.02% 36	10.17% 6	11.86% 7	3.39% 2	1.69% 1	10.17% 6	1.69% 1	59
X	Extra Curricular Activities	54.63% 34	5.08% 3	1.69% 1	13.56% 8	3.39% 2	8.47% 5	0 6	59
Totals		21.53% 127	17.46% 103	13.73% 81	23.73% 140	7.97% 47	13.40% 79	.33% 2	1.9% 11
									590

The Chi-Square Test was employed on Table 9 for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data. Table 9 represents the responses for Columbia High School. For Item I, the Columbia teachers indicated the principal reacted by asking questions about their idea or concern. For items II, III, IV, V and VIII, the Columbia teachers indicated the principal reacted by giving instructions about what to do with their idea or concerns. For items VI, VII, IX and X, the Columbia teachers indicated the principal reacted by complimenting them for having and sharing ideas or concerns. The accumulated totals show the Columbia teachers felt the principal reacted in most instances by giving instruction about what to do with their idea or concerns.

The survey of the Columbia teachers represented by the responses in Table 8 pointed out that teachers communicated with various persons when seeking assistance with a given situation. The persons with whom they communicated most frequently were identified to be the department chairpersons. The Columbia teachers also felt the principal reacted to their ideas of concerns most frequently by giving instructions about what to do with their ideas or concerns.

H_4 The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference (at the .05 level) in patterns of selection of persons with whom teachers communicated in the three selected DeKalb County High Schools.

Teachers communicative patterns from Dunwoody are presented subsequently. The Chi-Square test was employed on Table 10 for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data.

At Dunwoody High School the following data were collected, examined, tabulated and presented. Of 600 responses, 154 responses or 25.67% of the teachers pointed out the assistant principal was the person with

TABLE 9

PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS TO RESPONSE BY COLUMBIA
TEACHERS TO PRACTICAL SITUATION QUERIES BY COLUMBIA TEACHERS

ITEM	Judgment	Instruction	Compliment	Questions	Acceptance	Not Applicable	No Response	Incorrect Response	TOTAL
I	8	12	9	16	4	10	0	0	59
II	9	12	2	7	0	26	2	1	59
III	4	31	4	4	4	9	2	1	59
IV	7	9	3	5	1	31	2	1	59
V	9	22	1	5	7	13	1	1	59
VI	8	3	21	7	4	16	0	0	59
VII	4	11	16	11	6	11	0	0	59
VIII	7	16	2	6	0	27	0	1	59
IX	5	2	12	2	2	32	1	3	59
X	2	0	31	5	3	17	0	1	59
TOTALS	63	118	101	68	31	192	8	9	590

$$\chi^2 = 76.71$$

$$df = 63$$

$$P < .1151$$

whom they communicated most frequently in five of the ten categories. Those categories are Items I, III, V, VI, and IX. The assistant principal shared receiving the highest number of responses in Items V and IX.

The persons receiving the second highest number of responses were the department chairpersons. Of 600 responses, 134 responses or 22.33% of the Dunwoody teachers indicated the department chairpersons were the persons with whom they communicate with most frequently in two of the categories. Those categories are Items VII and VIII. The person receiving the third highest number of responses was the counselor. Of 600 responses 113 responses 18.13% of the Dunwoody teachers indicated the counselor was the person with whom they communicated most frequently in three of the ten categories. Those categories are Items II, IV, and IX. The counselors shared with the assistant principals the highest number of responses in Item IX.

The person receiving the fourth highest number of responses was the principal. Of 600 responses, 68 responses or 11.33% or the Dunwoody teachers indicated the principal was the person with whom they communicated most frequently in one of the ten categories. The category is Item X.

The person receiving the fifth highest number of responses was the instructional coordinator. Of 600 responses, 18 or 3% of the Dunwoody teachers indicated the instructional coordinator was the person with whom they communicated most frequently.

H₅ The null hypothesis for the "B" portion of this study states there will be no significant difference (at the .05 level) in the way high school principals in the DeKalb School System respond to teachers ideas and concerns.

The Chi-Square test was employed on this Table 11 for the purpose of interpreting the statistical significance of the data. Table 11 represents the responses for the Dunwoody High School. For Items I, II and III, the Dunwoody teachers felt the principal reacted by asking

TABLE 10
DUNWOODY RESPONSES
ROLE GROUPS SELECTED BY DUNWOODY TEACHERS FOR
COMMUNICATION ON PRACTICAL SITUATIONS

		ROLE GROUPS							Total
		Principal	Assistant Principal	Counselor	Department Chairperson	Instructional Chairperson	None of the Above	No Response	
I	Goals and Objectives	8.33% 5	46.67% 28	1.67% 1	26.67% 16	10% 6	3.33% 2	3.33% 2	0 60
II	Student Progress	3.33% 2	26.67% 16	35% 21	20% 12	1.67% 1	3.33% 2	6.67% 2	4 60
III	Student Behavior	5% 3	33.33% 20	30% 18	11.67% 7	0% 0	15% 9	3.33% 2	1.67% 1 60
IV	Professional	0% 0	5% 3	88.33% 53	1.67% 1	0% 0	3.33% 2	1.67% 1	0 60
V	Classroom Control	28.33% 17	28.33% 17	1.67% 1	1.67% 1	1.67% 1	31.67% 19	3.33% 2	3.33% 2 60
VI	Leadership Assessment	10% 6	41.67% 25	0% 0	28.33% 17	8.33% 5	6.67% 4	3.33% 2	1.67% 1 60
VII	Classroom Performance	3.33% 2	30% 12	0% 0	50% 30	0% 0	20% 12	5% 3	1.67% 1 60
VIII	Instruction Techniques	8.33% 5	15% 9	0% 0	53.33% 32	5% 3	10% 6	6.67% 4	1.67% 1 60
IX	Parent Involvement	16.67% 10	31.67% 19	31.67% 19	3.33% 2	0% 0	6.67% 4	5% 3	5% 3 60
X	Extra Curricular Activities	30% 18	8.33% 5	0% 0	26.67% 16	3.33% 2	16.67% 10	5% 3	10% 6 60
TOTAL		11.33% 68	25.67% 154	18.83% 113	22.33% 134	3% 18	11.68% 70	4% 24	3.17% 19 600

$$x^2 = 165.27$$

$$df = 63$$

$$z = 7.00 < .01$$

questions about their ideas or concerns. For Items IV, V, and VIII, the teachers for Dunwoody described the principals' reactions as giving instructions about what to do with their ideas or concerns. For Item IX, the Dunwoody teachers described the principal's reaction as making a judgment about the worth of their idea or concern. The Dunwoody teachers generally described their principal's reaction as asking questions about their ideas or concerns.

The survey of the Dunwoody teachers represented by the responses in Table 10 and 11 pointed out that teachers communicated with various persons when seeking assistance with a given situation. The persons with whom they communicated most frequently was identified to be the assistant principal. The Dunwoody teachers also felt the principal reacted to their ideas or concerns most frequently by asking questions about their ideas or concerns.

Summary

The results of the Avondale respondents in Table 6 and 7 revealed the principal as the person whom the Avondale teachers communicated most frequently. This was indicated by the highest number of accumulated total responses. However, this result possible existed because the principal received the majority of the responses in Items IX and X. Examining the table by items showed the department chairperson as the person whom the Avondale teachers communicated most frequently. This was indicated by the highest number of items where the Avondale teachers communicated with the department chairpersons more frequently. For the summary of the "B" portion, it was pointed out by the Avondale teachers that their principal reacted most often by giving instructions about what to do with their

TABLE 11

PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS TO RESPONSE BY DUNWOODY
TEACHERS TO PRACTICAL SITUATION QUERIES BY DUNWOODY TEACHERS

ITEM	Judgment	Instruction	Compliment	Questions	Acceptance	Not Applicable	No Response	Incorrect Response	TOTAL
I	4	8	6	11	5	17	4	5	60
II	3	9	0	13	1	27	5	2	60
III	2	10	1	11	7	23	4	2	60
IV	1	10	3	7	9	25	5	0	60
V	7	12	2	9	5	18	4	3	60
VI	8	4	9	9	5	17	6	2	60
VII	3	8	10	6	0	23	7	3	60
VIII	3	16	2	8	2	21	6	2	60
IX	7	1	3	6	5	25	6	7	60
X	1	1	25	5	3	17	5	3	60
TOTALS	39	79	61	85	42	213	52	29	600

$$\chi^2 = 23.53$$

$$df = 63$$

$$z = 4.32$$

ideas or concerns. A close second opinion was that the principal complimented them for having or sharing ideas or concerns.

The results of the Columbia respondents in Tables 8 and 9 revealed the department chairperson as the person whom the Columbia teachers communicated most frequently. This was indicated by the highest number of total responses and by item totals. The department chairpersons were identified as the persons whom the Columbia teachers communicated most frequently in Items I, II, VII and VIII in four out of ten items. For the summary of the "B" portion, the principal's reactions were described by the Columbia teachers most often as giving instructions about what to do with their idea or concerns.

The result of the Dunwoody respondents in Table 10 and 11 revealed the assistant principal as the person whom the Dunwoody teachers communicated most frequently. This was indicated by the highest number of total responses and by item totals. The assistant principal was identified as the person whom the teachers communicated most frequently in Items I, III, V, VI and IX of the ten items. For the summary of the "B" portion, the Dunwoody teachers described their principal's reactions most frequently by asking questions about their ideas or concerns. A close second opinion was that the principal reacted by giving instructions about what to do with their ideas or concerns.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction and Background to Study

This chapter will summarize the exploratory study of teacher-principal communication patterns, discuss implications of the study for practice in the field of school administration and make recommendations for future research.

Employed as principal, the writer proposed to study principal-teacher communications on the basis of practical experience as a school administrator. Such experiences have led to the belief that such a study would result in a contribution toward more effective use of principal-teacher communication in the area of classroom instruction, and the entire school curricula.

Rationale and Procedures

The issue of principal-teacher communications has been the topic research sponsored by educator's professional organizations. These researchers have found relationships between the frequency and the types of communication, between purpose and the types of communication, and between training principals for empathy and actual empathetic behaviors.

As noted in the study by Carl Helwigs, "An Analysis of the Relationship of the Degree of Satisfaction of Teachers Within Certain Ohio Schools With the Formal Communication of Their Principal" no significant

correlation has been established between frequency of principal-teacher communications and teacher morale. However, Ellsworth Tomplins, J. Lloyd Trump, Jerrold M. Novotney, Blumberg and Schmuck in "The Challenge that Change Presents to Principals" suggested that to help principals meet the challenge of change, essential actions include enlarging the administrative staff, increasing staff productivity through a horizontal and relatively informal type of organization, delegating decision-making and administrative responsibilities as much as possible and improving his own communication skills to maintain a clear understanding of roles and relationship among school system administrators.

More importantly as reported in the article, "Improving Communication Skills of Administrators" by Beale and Bost:

Assistant principals, indeed, all school administrators, must work with people. A vital factor in working effectively with people is the ability to communicate.

According to Beale and Bost, the ability to put one's self in the other fellow's shoes and let him know you are interested in the single most important factor in the helping process. Recognizing this factor, Beale and Bost designed a workshop with the express purpose of improving the interpersonal skills of 26 assistant principals. The results of the study gave overwhelming support to Beale's and Bost's belief that positive changes can be made in the empathic discrimination abilities of assistant principals. The best and most effective communication between teacher and principal exists when the principal shows interest and understanding, and yet is non-judgmental. Thus, the more empathetic the principal's response, the better the teachers felt. Presumably, the better the teachers felt, the better they, in turn, would perform.

The literature surveyed in Chapter II as well as the miscellaneous and informal comments of teachers in the survey bore out that patterns of communication between principals and teachers do have an effect on individuals within a school system. Teachers who go to principals and other administrators for guidance concerning student's progress or behavior, questions regarding professional goals, problems relating to instruction and curriculum planning, and in other daily activities are asking for assistance in carrying out duties which influence all aspects of school life. The type of response and the teachers' perception of the administrator's attitude, therefore, have a powerful influence on the entire school.

Procedure

In order to secure data for the purpose of this study, the writer first began recording some complaints, gripes and negative responses from teachers at various stations during school hours and in after-school functions.

The writer adapted the categories used in the Administration Empathy Discrimination Index to formulate questions to identify ten areas for which the researcher formulated practical situations that required possible teacher -principal communication. A combined questionnaire checklist was devised. Data necessary for this study was collected by administering the questionnaire checklist. The findings were reported in this research.

Findings

As was stated in Chapter 4, at Avondale the respondents indicated the department chairpersons to be the individuals with whom Avondale teachers communicated most frequently. The Avondale teachers described their principal's reactions most often as giving instructions about what to

do with their ideas of concerns. Reviewing the results from the Columbia respondents indicated the department chairpersons as the individuals with whom they communicated most often. The Columbia teachers described their principal's reactions most often as giving instructions about what to do with their ideas of concerns. The survey of Dunwoody respondents indicated that teachers communicated most often with the assistant principal. The Dunwoody teachers described their principal reactions most often as asking questions about their ideas or concerns. The findings from the data gathered points to the rejection of the null hypotheses.

Implications of the Study

The researcher used his planned procedure in testing the hypothesis of this study. Involvement in the process led to inevitable evidence of a few shortcomings or limitations in the procedure. One suggestion to future researchers interested in a similar study would be to use a forced choice instrument. The unsolicited comments appearing on the questionnaire used in this study could not be statistically tabulated.

Once the instrument has been selected, it would be valuable for a researcher to select a revised method of sampling the teacher responses. One suggestion would be to use more than three schools in order to obtain a larger sample. Another suggestion would be to provide more time for collecting the questionnaires since they were only 159 responses turned in out of 230 distributed. The volume of responses would possibly increase if schools were selected which had not been recent targets of research. The collection procedure could have been streamlined by appointing a contact person in each school who was not a subject of the survey (a person without an administrative role) who would collect the responses. If principals

collect the questionnaires, there is some chance that teachers may feel intimidated in their responses even if assured of anonymity.

As is the case in any research, this study presents further questions. Future researchers may wish to study the inclusion or exclusion of counseling coursework in the graduate programs of administration and supervision to note any possible effect on the degree of empathetic response in administrators.

Since administrators set the tone and mode of communication patterns with the staff in faculty meetings as a possible factor in frequency and effectiveness of teacher-principal communications.

Although it was beyond the scope of this research to find a relationship between teachers' reactions toward principals and academic excellence of students it would indeed be an invaluable hypothesis to investigate. Thus, supported by the findings of this project, another inquiry could explore the ramifications of principal-to-teacher-to-student empathy.

The trend toward a declining quantity of public school pupils demands and increase in the quality of education and its accountability to the public. Instruction and services must become upgraded.

It is especially important that school administrators improve their quality of communication since an employee's positive self-concept tends to improve job performance and since teachers themselves influence the self-concept of children. Those administrators who choose to strengthen their feedback techniques through applying the conclusions of research in this area will surely become leaders in the future of public education.

APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE

Introductory Statement

Perhaps you and I have been asked on several occasions to answer some questions included in a questionnaire for some reason. This questionnaire is designed to survey your candid feelings concerning ten specific areas in an exploration of teacher-principal communication patterns.

If you answer the questions carefully and thoughtfully the information may be of benefit to you, students, teachers, and other educational personnel in DeKalb County and even other school systems throughout the nation.

When the study is completed, we shall be happy to make the results known to you.

Before you begin to answer any one of the on-going questions, circle each item below as it concerns you:

Sex: M F ; Race: B W ; Other: _____

School: _____ Avondale, _____ Columbia, _____ Dunwoody

Department: _____ English, _____ Mathematics,

_____ Science, _____ Social Science,

_____ P. E., _____ Art

_____ Home Economics, _____ Other _____

Number of Years Teaching Experience: _____ 1-5, _____ 6-10,

_____ 11-15, _____ Over 15

Highest Certificate Held: _____ T-5, _____ T-6, _____ Ph.D.,

_____ Other _____

Instructions: Listed below are questions related to ten specific areas of teacher/principal communication. In each area are two specific questions, one relating to which administrator you seek out for help with given problems and one relating to how your principal has reacted when approached with given situations.

Using the appropriate responses listed below, answer all twenty questions as they relate to you and your teaching situation. Put the number of your response in the blank in front of the letters a or b.

- (1) The principal
- (2) The assistant principal for instructions
- (3) The counselor
- (4) The department chairperson
- (5) The instructional coordinator
- (6) None of the above
- (7) The principal made a judgment about the worth of my idea or concern
- (8) The principal gave instructions about what to do with my idea or concern
- (9) The principal complimented me for having and sharing ideas or concerns
- (10) The principal asked questions about my idea or concern
- (11) Not applicable

- I. ____ (a) If you are having difficulty in the development of objectives and goals for the school program, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When you have communicated with the principal about instructional goals and objectives in the past, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- II. ____ (a) If you are having difficulty assessing students' progress in your classroom with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When communicating with the principal strategies for assessing students' progress, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- III. ____ (a) If you wanted advice on how to develop student self-control, whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When you reported a serious behavior problem to your principal, in what way has he most frequently responded?
- IV. ____ (a) If you seek (professional) assistance for counseling students, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When you wanted feedback from the principal on a counseling technique, in what way has he most frequently responded?
- V. ____ (a) If a student questioned your authority in the classroom with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When a student failed to follow your instructions and you reported it to your principal, in what ways has the principal most frequently responded?
- VI. ____ (a) If you wanted to demonstrate your instructional leadership qualities, with whom would you communicate most frequently.
- ____ (b) When you discussed instructional leadership strategies which are innovative with the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- VII. ____ (a) If you were pleased with a lesson that you prepared, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When you communicated concerns about your classroom performance to the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- VIII. ____ (a) If you wanted to share your knowledge of a variety of instructional techniques, with whom would you communicate most frequently?

- ____(b) When you needed additional information concerning an instructional technique from the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- IX. ____ (a) If you have experienced difficulty with a parent, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When a parent has questioned your judgment in the presence of the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?
- X. ____ (a) If you were excited about the success of your extracurricular activity, with whom would you communicate most frequently?
- ____ (b) When you have shared success in extracurricular activity with the principal, in what way has the principal most frequently responded?

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